

Policy	Revision: 0
Effective: November, 2011	Review Date: January, 2014
Providing Goods and Services to Persons with Disabilities	

Purpose

To provide goods and services to persons with disabilities, in accordance with the Accessibility Standards for Customer Service, Ontario Regulation 429/07 and Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) 2005 and to communicate and interact in a manner that respects their dignity.

Definitions:

Disability: As defined in the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005, Section 2, means:

- a) Any degree of physical disability, infirmity, malformation or disfigurement that is caused by bodily injury, birth defect or illness
- b) A condition of mental impairment or developmental disability
- c) A learning disability or dysfunction on one or more of the processes involved in understanding or using symbols or spoken language
- d) A mental disorder
- e) An injury or disability for which benefits were claimed or received under the Workplace Safety and Insurance Act 1997

Accommodation: a means, through reasonable efforts, of preventing and removing barriers that impede individuals with disabilities

Independence: freedom from control or influence of others, freedom to make your own choices

Goods and Services: goods and services provided by Advantage Engineering Inc.

Assisted Device: any device used by people with disabilities to help with their daily living such as wheelchairs, walkers, white canes, oxygen tanks, electronic communication devices etc.

Support Person: an individual hired or chosen by a person with a disability to provide services or assistance with communication, mobility, personal care, medical needs or with access to goods or services

Service Animal: an animal that is being used because of a person's disability; this is either readily apparent or is supported by a letter from a medical practitioner.

Notification

Should an employee at Advantage Engineering Inc. know that a person with a disability is coming into the facility they should ask before their visit if or how we can accommodate them to ensure they have proper accessibility

Emergency Response for Disabled Employees

Managers or Supervisors in each area are responsible to ensure disabled employees are located and assigned a person to help them exit the building and bring to the designated meeting area if necessary (see HSP-04 Emergency Preparedness Procedure)

Emergency Response for Disabled Visitors

The visiting disabled person's contact person is responsible to help them exit the building and bring to the designated meeting area

Providing service to persons who are hard of hearing or deaf:

1. Identify yourself by name and look directly at the person when approaching him/her. Use a normal volume to speak and be attentive to cues that the person may be having difficulty hearing the conversation. You may speak slightly louder or suggest moving to a quieter location
2. Explore other means of communication, such as writing. If the person reads lips, do not obstruct your face and if possible stand directly in front of him/her. Provide information clearly and concisely, and ensure a shared understanding by paraphrasing and repeating communication more clearly before the interaction is over.
3. Ensure that if the person uses an assistive device to help them interact in a situation, ask if he/she needs assistance with the device, and support him/her to use the device. For example a person may use communication aids, hearing aids, or a personal amplification device. If a hearing alert dog is present, do not pet or otherwise distract the service animal
4. Focus conversation to the person with a disability, if a sign language interpreter accompanies that person, obtain consent from the person with the disability before engaging in conversation that includes confidential information.

Providing service to persons with vision loss:

1. Identify yourself by name when approaching the person, and speak directly to him/her in normal tones.
2. Address the person by name to ensure the person understands someone is speaking to him/her
3. Adjust lighting in accordance with the person's stated preference, for example, raise or dim the room lighting, and/or close curtains/blinds
4. If the person uses an assistive device to help them interact in a situation, ask if he/she needs assistance with the device and support him/her to use the device as needed. A person may use a white cane or be accompanied by a guide dog. Do not pet or otherwise distract the animal.

5. Offer to read brochures or documents to a person with low vision, and offer assistance in the use of any assistive device that the person may have, such as magnifying glasses and screen magnifiers
6. At the end of the visit let the person know before you leave.
7. Offer assistance to guide a person, walking slightly ahead and providing information on the surroundings related to uneven ground/steps/obstacles.
8. For those who can read standard text, written communication is clear and large enough to read easily. For example, use contrasting colors between the text and background

Providing service to persons who are deaf and blind

A support person will likely accompany a person who is deaf and blind or the deaf and blind person will have a card indicating their preference on how to communicate.

1. Ask if they need assistance with any assistive device and support them to use the device as needed.
2. Focus your conversation to the person with a disability when a sign language interpreter accompanies.

Providing service to persons with mental health disabilities

1. Engage with the person to have a shared understanding of how you may be of assistance to him/her, recognizing symptoms may not always be present or he/she may be having difficulty controlling their symptoms.
2. Provide information in a clear and concise manner, listen carefully, and restate information to ensure a shared understanding of the communication. Speak slowly and break-up lengthy conversations to allow the person to process the information; this may help decrease the person's anxiety

Providing service to persons with physical disabilities

1. Ask if the person needs help with any assistive device, and provide support as needed. For example, a person may use a wheelchair, scooter, crutches, cane, walker, or personal oxygen devices.
2. Ensure hallways are free of obstacles in the public areas and building. If needed, assist the person with handling brochures or documents and reaching for the item when required.
3. Ask permission to move a person's assistive device unless in an emergency situation

Providing service to persons with speech or language difficulties

1. Engage with the person to have a shared understanding of how to be of assistance, recognizing he/she may take longer to communicate. Ask questions that require one or two word answers and do not interrupt the person when responding
2. Ask if they need assistance or support with any device as needed.

Providing Service to people who use support people

1. Obtain consent from the person with the disability before engaging in conversation that includes confidential information.
2. Communicate directly to the person with the disability, rather than the support person.
3. Ensure persons with disabilities have access to their support person
4. Understand and recognize circumstances where a support person will be required to ensure health and safety and communicate this need to the person with the disability.
5. Advantage Engineering may require a person with a disability to be accompanied by a support person if it is necessary to protect the health and safety of the person with a disability or the safety of others on the premises.

Providing Service to persons who use service animals

Note: Advantage Engineering recognizes that some employees may be afraid or allergic to service support animals. In these situations, alternative means of providing goods and services to the person with the disability will be offered.

1. Identification of service animals may be by the vest, harness, or saddle packs they wear. The animal may be observed providing assistance. The person may have a letter from a physician or nurse, stating they require the animal for reasons related to a disability or have a valid identification card.
2. Permit the service animal to accompany the person with the disability in the office areas, it is preferred that they do not go into the plant area as the animal and/or person may get injured by debris or objects. If it is necessary for that person to go into the plant area they must be accompanied by their contact person. That contact person must be their guide to ensure they do not come into contact with any debris or objects that may cause injury to them or their service animal. Employees should not interfere with the service animal by petting, feeding, or distracting it in any way. The person with the disability is responsible to ensure that their service animal is in control at all times, is well behaved, not a threat to health and safety, and immunizations are up to date
3. Ask the person to remove his/her service animal in the event the animal is showing disruptive or aggressive behavior, such as growling or barking, or causing damage

Feedback

Advantage Engineering Inc. welcomes feedback regarding the provision of goods and services to persons with disabilities. Feedback may be provided in person, in writing, e-mail or telephone to the Human Resource Dept. and/or the Health and Safety Dept.

Advantage Engineering Inc. will review all feedback it receives and respond to such feedback where appropriate based on the nature of the feedback received and will also take into consideration as part of the ongoing review of the policy

Training

Advantage Engineering Inc. will ensure that its procedures related to Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act 2005 are made available through the company intranet, and is also located in the log book at the reception desk

Advantage Engineering will provide training on how to deliver goods and services to all employees who deal with members of the public on its behalf and any employees with disabilities.

The training will become a component of the new employee orientation training for employees who deal with members of the public and any employees with disabilities and will be provided within a reasonable time frame

All training will be recorded and a copy kept in the employee's personnel file.

Applicable Documents:

Emergency Preparedness (HSP-04)

Ministry of Community and Social Services: Access Ontario www.accesson.ca/compliance

Ministry of Community and Social Services: Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities www.mcass.gov.on.ca/mcass/english/pillars/accessibilityOntario